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Diana T Fritz 05/24/2007 04:57:45 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

Cable  
Text:

UNCLASSIFIED

SIPDIS  
TELEGRAM

March 02, 2003

To: No Action Addressee  
Action: Unknown  
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1028 - ROUTINE)  
TAGS: PREL, ETRD, KIPR  
Captions: None  
Subject: UAEG WORKING WITH PRIVATE COMPANIES TO STEM VIDEO  
PIRACY  
Ref: None

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UNCLAS ABU DHABI 01028

SIPDIS  
CXABU:  
ACTION: ECON  
INFO: P/M AMB DCM POL  
Laser1:  
INFO: FCS

DISSEMINATION: ECON  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: DCM: RALBRIGHT  
DRAFTED: ECON:CMCRUMPLER  
CLEARED: ECON:TWILLIAMS

VZCZCADI556  
RR RUEHC RUEHGV RUCNWT0 RUCPDO  
DE RUEHAD #1028 0611333  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 021333Z MAR 03  
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8640  
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0508  
RUCNWT0/WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION COLLECTIVE  
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 001028

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PPR AND EB/IPC FOR WILSON  
STATE PASS USTR - ALVAREZ AND BUNTIN  
STATE PASS LOC - TEPP  
USDOC FOR USPTO - URBAN  
USDOC FOR LASHLEY  
GENEVA PASS USTR

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KIPR](#) [ETRD](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: UAEG WORKING WITH PRIVATE COMPANIES TO STEM  
VIDEO PIRACY

[¶](#)1. (U) Classified by DCM Richard Albright for reasons  
1.5 (b) and (d).

[¶](#)2. (U) Summary: According to press reports, several  
labor camps outside of Abu Dhabi have in the past year  
become centers for pirated video cassettes; workers

from south India record the latest movies on VHS tapes and rent them out to consumers in Abu Dhabi at reduced prices. But UAE authorities have found an unlikely ally in their efforts to eliminate the trade and are turning to employers to educate their workers about the legal risks of counterfeiting. At the UAEG's urging, contracting companies who manage the labor camps are posting signs warning workers that the company will take legal action against workers involved in counterfeiting. According to Abu Dhabi police, this campaign has resulted during the last few weeks in the imprisonment and deportation of dozens of counterfeiters in the labor camps. End summary.

¶3. (U) Local contracting companies are posting signs in English and in the various languages of the subcontinent warning employees that they will be fired and referred to the police if they are engaging in counterfeiting activity. The notices also remind employees that, under the new Copyright Law of 2002, counterfeiters may face two to nine months imprisonment and a fine ranging from USD \$2,700 to \$55,000. The penalty is doubled for repeat offenders according to the number of copyrights violated.

¶4. (U) According to the Abu Dhabi police, these laborers record movies on VHS tape and rent out 30 to 50 video cassettes each day at a rate far less than that of authorized video dealers -- about USD \$.50 to \$1 per video. These pirated movies, according to the police, reach the UAE via Pakistan and the Far East. Most of the new Hindi movies are smuggled via Pakistan, while Tamil movies come through Malaysia and Thailand. English movies are smuggled by Chinese expatriates from Hong Kong.

¶5. (U) The UAEG is cracking down on the counterfeiters in response to complaints by movie distributors, video store owners, and local cinemas. These businesses have reported 50 percent losses in distribution and 60 percent losses in their retail business during the last year. According to press reports, local merchants have formed a committee to strategize with Abu Dhabi law enforcement on ways to combat video piracy.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: The UAE authorities responsible for copyright enforcement are stretched thin and historically have relied on industry -- and, in this case, the legitimate employers of the workers-cum-counterfeiters -- to identify culprits and illicit activity. For workers in the labor camps, termination by their employers and loss of income are greater deterrents than imprisonment; contracting companies likewise have an incentive to keep workers under their sponsorship out of trouble. If this new tactic significantly reduces counterfeiting in the labor camps (and it is, according to press reports), the UAEG is likely to expand its program of working with local companies to ensure implementation of IPR policies to sectors of the economy where counterfeiting continues to be a problem. End comment.

Wahba